CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A welding system, comprising:

a power source;

a cable coupleable to the power source; and

a handle, comprising:

a first receiving portion operable to receive the cable in a first direction; and

a second receiving portion, the second receiving portion being operable to receive the cable in a second direction opposite the first direction.

2. The system as recited in claim 1, comprising:

a neck; and

an operating switch secured to the handle to control operation of the system,

wherein the handle is adapted to enable the operating switch to be positioned on the handle adjacent to the neck in a first configuration and positioned on the handle adjacent to the cable in a second configuration.

3. The system as recited in claim 1, wherein the handle has a first end, a second end opposite the first end, and a gripping portion that increases in cross-sectional area in each direction towards the first and second ends.

4. The system as recited in claim 1, comprising a wire feeder coupled to the power source to advance electrode wire through the cable.

5. A welding system, comprising:

an electrical power source;

a welding cable coupled to the electrical power source; and

a welding handle coupleable to the welding cable, comprising:

a first end;

a second end opposite the first end; and

a gripping portion, wherein the gripping portion increases in cross-sectional area from a first location between the first and second ends in each direction towards the first and second ends.

6. The system as recited in claim 5, wherein the system is a MIG welding system.

7. The system as recited in claim 5, wherein each end of the welding handle is operable to receive the welding cable.

8. The system as recited in claim 5, comprising a wire feeder operable to feed electrode wire through the welding cable.

9. A configurable handle for an arc welding system, comprising:

a first receiving portion operable to capture a welding cable oriented in a first direction relative to the handle; and

a second receiving portion operable to capture the welding cable oriented in a second direction relative to the handle.

10. The handle as recited in claim 9, wherein the handle comprises a plurality of handle pieces, each handle piece having a first and a second receiving region that is adapted to cooperate with a corresponding handle piece to form the first and second receiving portions, respectively, when the plurality of handle pieces are secured together.

11. The handle as recited in claim 9, comprising a trigger switch, wherein the handle is adapted to enable the trigger switch to be disposed on each end of the handle.

12. The handle as recited in claim 9, wherein the handle increases in cross-sectional area from a portion between each end of the handle towards each end of the handle.

13. The handle as recited in claim 9, comprising a gripping portion, wherein the gripping portion has a generally oval-shaped cross-section.

14. The handle as recited in claim 9, comprising a gripping portion, wherein the gripping portion has a generally teardrop-shaped cross-section.

15. The handle as recited in claim 9, wherein the handle generally is straight.

16. A handle for a welding system, comprising:

a first end;

a second end opposite the first end, and

a gripping portion between the first and second ends,

wherein the handle increases in cross-sectional area from the gripping portion in each direction towards the first and second ends.

17. The handle as recited in claim 16, wherein the gripping portion has a generally oval-shaped cross-section.

18. The handle as recited in claim 16, wherein the gripping portion has a generally teardrop-shaped cross-section.

19. The handle as recited in claim 16, wherein the handle is curved to less than 32 degrees.

20. The handle as recited in claim 16, wherein the handle has a perimeter length around the gripping portion of 4.4 inches.

21. The handle as recited in claim 16, wherein the handle has a length of 6.38 inches to 9.50 inches.

22. The handle as recited in claim 21, comprising a trigger, wherein the trigger has a length of 1.25 inches to 1.50 inches.

23. The handle as recited in claim 16, wherein the handle has a perimeter length around the gripping portion of 4.2 to 4.6 inches.

24. A welding handle piece, comprising:

a first and a second receiving portion adapted to capture a welding cable connector when secured to a corresponding welding handle piece, each receiving portion being located at an opposite end of the welding handle piece.

25. The welding handle piece as recited in claim 24, wherein the receiving portions are oriented to capture the welding cable from opposite directions.

26. A welding handle piece, comprising:

a first end portion;

a second end portion; and

a gripping portion, wherein the gripping portion is adapted to cooperate with a corresponding welding handle piece to increase cross-sectional area of the handle in each direction towards the first and second end portions.

27. A method of assembling a configurable welding gun, comprising the acts of:

selecting one of a first and a second end of a configurable welding handle for placement of an operating switch in relation to a neck of the configurable welding handle;

disposing the operating switch in one of a first and second handle pieces of the configurable welding handle;

disposing a welding cable coupleable to the neck within one of the first and second handle pieces such that the operating switch is oriented at the selected end of the configurable welding handle when the neck is coupled to the welding cable; and

securing the first handle piece to the second handle piece.

28. The method as recited in claim 27, further comprising the act of coupling the neck to the welding cable.

29. The method as recited in claim 28, wherein coupling comprises securing the neck directly to the welding cable.

30. A configurable welding gun for an arc welding system, comprising:

a handle securable to a welding cable;

a neck, and

a trigger securable to the handle, wherein the handle is adapted to enable the trigger to be positioned in each of four quadrants of the handle relative to the neck.

31. The welding gun as recited in claim 30, wherein the trigger is securable to the handle in a first location and the handle is operable to be secured to the welding cable in a plurality of orientations such that the first location is positionable to each of the four quadrants.